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ABSTRACT

Criteria representative of an exemplary reading program and defining the components and levels of school accountability for the Michigan Right to Read program are presented in this paper. Several components, including administration and organization, students/learners, needs assessment, delivery system/curriculum, delivery system/resources, delivery system/staff development, evaluation, and record keeping reporting, are listed as essential for determining an exemplary program. For each of the components, statements are listed that would be reflective of an excellent reading program. Statements are provided at the district level, building level, and classroom level. (WR)

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MICHIGAN CRITERIA OF EXCELLENCE IN READING

An exemplary reading program would assume that:

99% of the population under 15 years of age and 90% of those over 16 years of age can achieve functional reading literacy given the appropriate learning environments.

Rationale for Utilization of a Criteria of Excellence:

A Criteria of Excellence can establish the extent of program development so that the district's commitment to the teaching of reading to children is as public as possible, and (2) to provide a design and process for demonstrating school commitment, and staff accountability in reading program development and implementation.

The components listed below have been identified as essential for determining an exemplary program.

I. Administration and Organization
II. Students/Learners
III. Needs Assessment
IV. Delivery System/Curriculum
V. Delivery System/Resources
VI. Delivery System/Staff Development
VII. Evaluation
VIII. Record Keeping and Reporting

In order to guarantee as much local control as possible in fulfilling the Criteria of Excellence, (1) the local district is to select a number of essential categories in order to create a locally balanced program, and (2) the local district is to develop each category into those objectives which they consider will reflect an exemplary implementation of that category. Each selected category should be developed at the district, building, and classroom level.

An exemplary reading program is one that includes all of these essential components so as to encourage success, efficiency, and individualism.

A Criteria of Excellence in Reading is not a list of golden commandments to be strictly enforced, but a list of essential and supportive elements from which a local district chooses to develop and implement an exemplary reading program.

Purposes

The purposes for developing a Criteria of Excellence in Reading Statement are:

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1. To define the components of an exemplary reading program and the degree of achievement of each component.

2. To help define the goals and objectives for an exemplary reading program.

3. To help define the status of any reading program, and to assist with the needs assessment process.

4. To help define the delivery system(s) for an exemplary reading program.

5. To help validate the results of the delivery system(s) of local reading programs

6. To provide direction for the redesign and revision of reading goals, objectives, needs assessment, delivery systems, and validation procedures.

Assumptions

Several assumptions have been made. These include:

1. That an Accountability Model must be used by any local district that chooses to use the Criteria of Excellence in Reading Program Development.

2. That any Criteria of Excellence must represent in combination all of those reading components agreed upon by the State Department of Education Right to Read personnel, Specialists from the field of reading, and local district staff.

3. A Criteria of Excellence must reflect commitment to quality in reading programs chosen and developed by the local district, more than arbitrary standards imposed by another agency.

4. That reading program designs are developmental in nature involving the total staff, board, and community in their selection.

5. That an exemplary program will accommodate the needs and provide of personal growth of teachers, students, and administrators.

6. That by using the Criteria of Excellence in Reading strong components will be exposed for building an even stronger program.

These are the Criteria of Excellence defining the components and levels of School Accountability for the Michigan Right to Read Program. These have been carefully developed by the participants in the Right to Read Training Program. The expectation is that each Michigan school district will examine these, specifying how they are meeting, and will meet each of these Criteria of Excellence. A school district that fully implements these criteria will have an exemplary reading program.

CRITERIA	LEVELS OF SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY
Components:	District Level
ADMINISTRATION & Organization	
A. Goals and Policies are established and implemented for the Reading Program. This commitment includes all learners from preschool to adults.	A1. The Board of Education makes a commitment to the teaching of Reading by defining specific goals, that places the teaching of Reading and the learning of Reading skills as the top priority in the education system.
	A2. The Board of Education guarantees that there is opportunity for persons from the school and community to participate in the development of and to review the goals for Reading.
	A3. The Board of Education supports the goals by developing policies which allocate the best resources to the Reading Program
	A4. The Board of Education employs a superintendent and his staff who are committed to children's learning to Read as the top priority for the school district.

Building Level	Classroom Level
A5. The Principal implements the Board of Education's goals and policies in the Reading Program.	A6. Teachers support the Board of Education, Superintendent and Principal by implementing the goals and policies in the Reading Program.

CRITERIA	LEVELS OF SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY
Components:	District Level
A Management System that is identified and implemented for the total Reading Program.	B1. The Superintendent and his staff develop and implement a management system that insures that the Reading Program accommocates each child at his level. B2. The superintendent appoints a staff member to coordinate the development, implementations and evaluation of the Reading Curriculum.

Building Level	Classroom Level
B3. The Principal implement the management system throughout the Reading Program	B4. The Teacher applies the management system to Reading instruction.

CRITERIA	LEVELS OF SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY
Components:	District Level
I. STUDENTS/LEARNERS	
C. The importance of each student's strengths, interests needs and differences, including age, race, sex, and culture are considered in the development and implementation of the Reading Program.	C1. The Board of Education has policies that allows for Reading instruction for pre-schoolers through adults. C2. ~~The Board of Education has policies that are consistent with the implementation of equal opportunities for all students/learners.~~ C3. The superintendent and his staff guarantees Reading instruction that results in student learning. C4. The Board of Education and/or Superintendent and staff have policies that are consistent and insure opportunities of equality for all students/ learners.

Building Level	Classroom Level
C5. The principal is responsible for the development and use for the students of reading resources (human and material) provided by the school system.	C9. The teacher uses content information on each student's needs, interests, strengths and differences to plan for and personalize Reading instruction.
C6. The principal leads the staff in implementing reading instruction which accommodates the students learning style that results in student learning.	C10. The teacher organizes the classroom so as to guarantee the student's success in learning to read including both skill development and content areas.
C7. The principal and staff organize the building's resources (human & material) to maximize the importance of students.	
C8. The principal and staff match student learning styles with materials so as to promote the students success in learning to Read.	

CRITERIA	LEVELS OF SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY
Components:	District Level
III. NEEDS ASSESSMENT	
D. Assessment and testing are used to provide information for decision making in reading program.	D1. The Board of Education requires indicators of need prior to curriculum development and curriculum change in the reading program. D2. The superintendent, staff and teacher design and select the assessment tools which include student achievement tests, questionnaire, and observations flow charts, evaluation, etc. D3. The superintendent and his staff use the needs assessment for making decisions about the reading program.

Building Level	Classroom Level
04. The principal and staff employ the assessment process to gather information needed for decision-making concerning the reading program. 05. The principal and staff use assessment data to match teaching styles, learning environments, and learning styles of students	06. In the reading program, teachers use a variety of assessment tools (a) to determine learning styles of students (b) To diagnose learning problems of students (c) to select methods and materials for reading instruction.

CRITERIA	LEVELS OF SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY
Components:	District Level
SYSTEM/CURRICULUM/ DELIVERY	
E. All segments of the school and community are involved when the reading curriculum is developed.	E1. The Board of Education guarantees that there is opportunity for persons from the school and community to participate in the reading curriculum development process.
	E2. The superintendent hires appropriate staff and authorizes adequate time and authority to design and develop the Reading curriculum including reading in the content areas.
	E3. The Board of Education approves the Reading curriculum prior to implementation.
	E4. The superintendent and his staff provide for dissemination of the Reading curriculum to the school staff and community persons

Building Level	Classroom Level
E5. The principal and his staff are held responsible for participating in development of the total reading curriculum, including reading in the content areas	E6. The teacher is responsible for providing significant information about student/learner needs and interests that should be used in making curriculum decisions. E7. The teacher creates opportunities for children to provide suggestions regarding the Reading Curriculum. E8. Teachers endorse the total Reading Curriculum prior to presentation to the Board of Education for approval. E9. Teachers work cooperatively both across grade levels and withinggrade level, in the development of a comprehensive Reading Program.

CRITERIA	LEVELS OF SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY
Components:	District Level
All segments of the school and community are involved when the Reading curriculum is implemented.	F1. The Board of Education provides the resources (human & material) for implementing the approved Reading Curriculum. F2. The superintendent and his staff allocates the resources (human & material) for implementing the Reading curriculum.

Building Level	Classroom Level
F4. The principal is responsible to provide opportunities for all teachers to understand and implement the reading curriculum.	F6. All teachers implement the approved Reading curriculum for each students continuous progress.
F5. The principal guarantees that the prescribed reading curriculum is available to all students.	Teachers use their skills to incorporate the Reading curriculum into all areas of each students instruction.

CRITERIA	LEVELS OF SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY
Components:	District Level
	F3. The Superintendent and his staff initiate the implementation of the approved Reading curriculum.
. All segments of the school and community are involved when the Reading curriculum is evaluated.	G1. The Board of Education guarantees that there is opportunity for persons from the school and the community to participate in the Reading curriculum evaluation process.
	G2. The Superintendent and his staff coordinate the evaluation of the reading curriculum.
	G3. The Superintendent and his staff apply evaluation criteria for the purpose of reading curricula improvement.

Building Level	Classroom Level
	F8. The teacher provides feedback on the reading program design to the administration.
G4. The principal and teachers evaluate the Board approved Reading curriculum for usefulness in student learning and manageability in the learning environment.	G5. The teacher provides feedback about the student's learning within the reading design to the principal and administration.

CRITERIA	LEVELS OF SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY
Components	District Level
The superintendent and his staff allocate the financial resources based on the Reading priorities. The Board of Education, the superintendent and the staff guarantee a cross-section of school and community resources in the selection of materials.	15. The principal guarantees that all requests for materials are consistent with the approved Reading curriculum. 16. The principal and his staff take part in field testing reading materials prior to purchasing for building or district-wide use.

Building Level	Classroom Level
18. The Teacher evaluates and recommends materials needed to create an environment responsive to students.	

CRITERIA	LEVELS OF SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY
Components	District Level
. DELIVER SYSTEM/RESOURCES (HUMAN & MATERIAL)	
H. Professional and para-professional staff with volunteers involved in reading instruction.	H1. The Board of Education requires all professional staff to have formal training in Reading.
	H2. The superintendent and staff recruit and hire only teachers who are competent in teaching Reading.
	H3. The Board of Education has policies that encourage the use of para-professionals and volunteers in Reading instruction.
	H4. The superintendent appoints a staff member to coordinate, train and supervise para-professionals and volunteers in the Reading program.
. Necessary material resources are selected and used.	I1. The Board of Education generates the financial resources to support the Reading program.

Building Level	Classroom Level
H6. The principal assigns the staff so as to match teaching style and learning environment with the learning style of the students.	H9. The teacher develops the students the learning environment.
H7. The principal and his staff involve para-professionals and volunteers in the Reading instruction program	H10. The teachers use their skills to design a learning environment based on Reading content and the processes of classroom management.
H8. The principal assures the coordination and supervision of, and communication with the staff and volunteers	H11. The teacher plans with and for the total involvement of the para-professionals and volunteers in assisting with learning.
I4. The principal and his staff expend the financial resources to acquire materials that are necessary to implement the Reading curriculum.	I7. The Teacher selects and uses materials that will create a learning environment that meets the needs of students.

CRITERIA	LEVELS OF SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY
Components:	District Level
I. EVALUATION	
K. Evaluation is used to measure (1) the achievement of the students and the results of the implemented Reading Program.	K1. The Board of Education requires an annual evaluation of student achievement and the Reading program. K2. The superintendent and staff plan and have administered a regular testing and evaluation program. K3. The superintendent and staff use the results of the testing and evaulation when redesigning the Reading program.

Building Level	Classroom Level
K4. To measure pupil achievement (normative, objective, subjective) the principal and staff administer a variety of evaluation instruments.	K7. The teachers gather data to measure the effectiveness of the learning environment, and data for redesigning this environment.
K5. The principal and staff use the results of the evaluation to recommend changes in the Reading curriculum.	K8. The teachers use the evaluation data for decision-making regarding student promotion and placement.
K6. The principal and staff alter their own methods and materials for curriculum implementation based on the evaluation data.	

CRITERIA	LEVELS OF SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY
Components	District Level
. DELIVERY SYSTEM/STAFF DEVELOPMENT	
J. Staff development is provided to all staff that increases their competencies in Reading contents and the management of Reading instruction.	J1. The Board of Education generates financial resources to support the staff development activities. J2. The superintendent and his staff allocate the resources for staff development by: (a) identifying the training needs for staff. (b) including the participants in the planning of staff development activities (c) providing competent resources for meeting the needs of staff (d) providing training for all staff (including administrators, teachers, substitutes, and volunteers) involved in implementing the Reading curriculum (e) insuring the management of the Reading training in the staff development program.

Building Level	Classroom Level
J3. The principal participates in administrative in-service in Reading.	J8. Teachers are responsible for identifying and articulating their needs for staff development purposes.
J4. The principal provides leadership and participates in the in-service training of staff.	J9. The teachers are responsible for applying to their teaching, their learnings from the staff development activities.
J5. The principal provides information on staff training needs to those who design and plan the staff development activities.	
J6. The principal is responsible for observing and evaluating the increased teacher comptencies that result from the staff development activities.	
J7. The principal and staff provide feedback necessary to evaluate and improve the quality of the staff development activities.	

CRITERIA	LEVELS OF SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY
Components:	District Level
II. RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTING	
L. Records are kept and reported to those school and community persons involved.	L1. The Board of Education will require that the administration and staff document the Reading program and the students progress in the Reading program. L2. The superintendent and staff will design and select the Reading record keeping system. L3. The superintendent will report to the Board of Education and to the community on (a) the achievement of the students in the Reading program (b) the level of implementation of the Reading program (c) the status of the management of the Reading program.

Building Level	Classroom Level
L4. The principal and staff use the records for matching students with supportive learning environments. L5. The principal and staff maintain accurate records for assessing (a) the design, implementation and evaluation of the Reading progress (b) student progress	L6. The teacher documents student achievement in the Reading program. L7. The teacher reports the degree of student progress to the student, his parents, to the administration, and to other teachers.

In applying the Michigan Criteria of Excellence, a school district will want to develop criteria-referenced objectives that develop each of these statements. Evaluators, with the school staff, will judge the validity and comprehensiveness of the objectives. The evaluators will further judge the reliability of the documentation, and the total quality of the Reading Program.

In the final analysis, an exemplary Reading Program is one that significantly contributes to improving the quality of life for the students, school personnel, and the community.